Library of the Theological Seminary.

PRINCETON, N. J.

Collection of Puritan Literature.

Division PRL

Section

Number

SCA 11139

A

True Believers

Choice and Pleasure.

Instanced in the

Exemplary Life

OF

Mrs. MARY COXE,

The Late Wife of

Doctor *Thomas Coxe.*

Preached for Her Funeral

By *RICHARD BAXTER.*

Prov. 10. 7. *The memory of the just shall be blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot.*

LONDON.

Printed for *John Hancock* at the *Three Bibles* in *Cornhill*, next to *Pope's-Head-Alley.* 1680.

To my worthy and much honored

FRIEND,

Dr. Thomas Coxe.

SIR,

THough your great Kindness and Care of the health of me and mine, much oblige me to you, and your Personal Worth much more, and your worthy Children command my great Respect and Love; yet none of these should have

moved me to say a word of all that I have said of your deceased Wife, which I had not verily believed to be true: And it was Gods Grace in her, which much more commanded it, than all my Debt to you and yours.

She was so Exemplary, as that I think it my Duty, for the good of others, to make this Publication of her Character, and of this Sermon.

But one great Defect is here to be notified to the Reader, That almost all her secret way of Duty, and particular Converse, is omitted, which you that were still with her, could have described; For I thought meet to say no more, than I either knew my self, or was obvious and known to many.

The words which I heard but yester-

yeſterday from the mouth of your Brother in diſcourſe, were ſuch as I doubt can be ſaid of few, that in ſo many Years, from the hour of her Marriage, to her Death, ſhe was never known to do one diſobliging action, or ſpeak one diſobliging word, of or to any one of her Husbands Kinred or Relations.

Had it ſeemed meet to you, *or to your worthy and ingenious Son, and your pious Daughter (the true image of her Mother) to have been the Deſcriber of the Soul and Life, of this Exemplary Saint, how much more fully could you have done it, than I, that was ſo much leſs acquainted with her.*

She is gone home, and you and I are at the door; The Lord give us ſo to live by Faith on the Promiſe and Love of God, and the things unſeen, that thence we may daily

fetch our ruling Motives, and stablishing Consolations, and not from a transitory deceitful world; and following Christ and his Saints under the Cross, may with them possess the incorruptible Crown; and be found at his Call among those that love his appearing, and be for ever with the Lord. Amen, Amen.

Novemb. 19.
1679.

A TRUE

A True Believers Choice and Pleasure, &c.

PSAL. 119. 111.

Thy Testimonies have I taken for an heritage for ever; for they are the rejoycing of my heart.

A Text that speaketh of Rejoycing, and that in an heritage, and an heritage for ever, may seem unsuitable to a mournful Funeral: But it was chosen by our deceased friend, and not without justifiable reason. That which was a day of Sorrow to us, was a day of Rest and Joy to her; and it was meet that she should foresee that Joy, and tasting it in the first

fruits, ſhould commend that to us which ſhe had found ſo ſweet, and would bring us to the felicity which ſhe hath now obtained. If the damned ſenſualiſt, *Luk.* 16. would have had one ſent from another world, in hope to ſave his unbelieving Brethren, no wonder if a holy perſon were deſirous that others ſhould partake of her pleaſure and inheritance: and like the Lepers that found the Siege of *Samaria* raiſed, would not feaſt and rejoyce alone. She choſe this, no doubt, as that which was moſt lively imprinted on her own heart, with a juſt deſire that it might be imprinted alſo on the hearts of others; that ſo We may not only rejoyce with her that now rejoyceth in the heavenly poſſeſſion, but, as *Paul* ſaith, *Gal.* 6. 4. Every man may *prove his own works, and ſo may have rejoycing in himſelf alone, and not* (only) *in another.* Let us therefore by God's aſſiſtance ſo improve theſe words, as may conduce to this deſired end.

By God's [*Teſtimonies*] here is meant that ſupernaturally revealed *Law* and *Promiſe*, which was poſſeſſed by the Church of the Jews, as God's peculiar people, ſuppoſing the Law of Nature, and the common mercies which God had given

given to all the reſt of faln mankind. Both the Precepts and Promiſes are here included; the Types and their ſignification of the thing typified.

[*I have taken them*] ſignifieth, I have *believed them*, implying that God revealed them; and I have *Accepted them*, implying, that *God had Offered them*; and *I have choſen them*, implying the preferring them before all competitors; and *I have truſted them*, as ſignifying their ſpecial uſe, for the *guiding*, *ſtabliſhing*, *quieting*, and *ſaving* of the ſoul.

[*For an heritage*] ſignifieth

1. As that which I truſt to as my *ſecurity* for an *heavenly Inheritance*.

2. And as that which now is my *beſt portion* while I am in the way, (including the things connoted.)

3. And as that which I prefer before all wealth and worldly heritage. *Alexander* and *Cæſar* had larger Dominions than *David*; but neither of them was King of God's peculiar people, that had poſſeſſion of his Oracles, nor had the promiſes which he had, that Chriſt ſhould be his Son and Succeſſor on his Throne.

The word [*for ever*] relateth both to

the *Inheritance as everlasting*, and also to *David's choice*, as immutably hereupon determined.

They are said to be the *Rejoycing of the heart aptitudinally* in themselves, which caused him to choose them, and *actually*, because he had *chosen, believed, loved*, and *obeyed* them.

So that this is the sum of the sense [*'worldly men make choice of a worldly Inheritance, and hopes, and on this they trust; and in this they seek their chiefest pleasure: But I, though blessed largely with thy bounty, have suffered many afflictions in the world: But thy Word hath been my Guide, and thy Promises still fulfilled to me; and experience hath confirmed my Faith and Resolution, to lay all my Hope upon thy Word or Covenant, both for this life, and that to come, and from it I seek and fetch my comfort: It hath been my joy in all my sorrows, and in it to the last will I rejoyce*] This is the sense of the Text, from which we are all taught.

Doct. *That God's Covenant or Testimonies are the true Believers Heritage for ever, and as such are trusted and chosen by him; and therefore among*

among all the allurements and the crosses of this world, are the support and rejoycing of his heart.

In the handling this I shall shew you

I. *What it is in God's Testimonies* which make them fit to be our Heritage, and our Joy?

II. How they are called an *Heritage for ever*?

III. How they are so *taken* by Believers?

IV. How far they are their Joy?

I. In God's Covenant or Testimonies there is 1. The Author. 2. The Mediator. 3. The applying Agent. 4. The ascertaining Revelation. 5. The Donative or Benefit given. 6. The Guiding Doctrine and Law. 7. And the Persons or Subjects connoted to whom all this is suited, to be an Heritage for ever, and the rejoycing of their hearts.

1. The Author is *God*, the Lord of us and all; in whose hand and will is our Soul and Body, our Life and Death, our Health and Sickness, our Joy and Sorrow, whose loving-kindness is life, and better than life, *Psal.* 63. 3. who, if he will can make

us

us whole and happy, and who hath told us what he *will* do by his Covenant: He wanteth not Love, for he is *Love* it self; Essential, Infinite *Self-love*, communicating to his creatures such Love as his Wisdom seeth meet for them to receive. The Love that gave us the Mediator and the Covenant, will certainly perform it: It was of mercy that he *promised*: It is now of mercy and justice that he perform it. He wanteth not Wisdom to Rule the world by Truth and Goodness, and needeth not *deceit* and *falshood hereunto*, nor to flatter such worms as we into obedience. Nor doth he that maintaineth Heaven and Earth, want *power* to make good all his Word; nor is there any adverse power to make it difficult, and hazard the success. Indeed, he that seriously considereth the Divine Perfection, will think it were more strange and incredible, that God should not bless and glorifie the faithful, according to his Word. If it be credible that the Sun sends forth its illuminating and enlivening beams so far and wide, to so many millions of various creatures (though it scorch the unsuitable objects that are too neer;) it is creedible that God who is

Infi-

Infinite Goodneſs, ſhould bleſs the capable with heavenly Glory! And did we not ſee that ſin maketh many uncapable, it would be harder to reaſon to believe that all ſhall not be bleſſed by ſuch a God, than that all the faithful ſhall be bleſſed. And we find, that though both be hard to unbelievers, they are of the two more hardly brought to believe the Threatnings, than the Promiſes of God. What wonder is it that Infinite *Power*, *Wiſdom* and *Love*, ſhould make ſome of his creatures bleſſed by communication? and *Man* in ſpecial when he hath made him capable of it?

And what greater ſatisfaction and ſecurity can a fearful, troubled, dying man have, than the Infallible word of the moſt glorious God. Sure he that firmly believeth it to be his Word, can hardly chooſe but believe that it is true, and meet for our moſt quieting truſt.

2. The Angel and *Moſes* were the Mediators of the Jewiſh Law: But the Eternal Word incarnate is the Mediator of the New Covenant; promiſed only before (to *Abraham*, *David*, &c. yea to *Adam*) but ſent when made man in the fulneſs of time, *Gal.* 4. 4. And it muſt needs

needs be a ſure and excellent Covenant which is made and confirmed by ſuch a Mediator, named in the Prophecy, *Iſa.* 9. 6. *Wonderful, Counſellor, The Mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace, of the increaſe of whoſe Government and Peace there is no end. He is the Heir of all things by whom the worlds were made; the Brightneſs of God's Glory; the expreſs Image of his Perſon; and upholding all things by the word of his power; made better than Angels; having by Inheritance obtained a more excellent name*; whom all the Angels of God do worſhip; and for whom they diſdain not to miniſter to the Faithful. It is a ſure and comfortable Doctrine which muſt have ſuch a Preacher ſent from Heaven, and a certain Covenant which hath ſuch a wonderful Mediator.

3. But it is not like the powerleſs word of man, but the *Holy Spirit* of the Father and the Son undertaketh to accompany it, and as the Arm of God to ſet it home, and make it effectual to to its proper ends: We have not only *heard* this word, but *felt it*: As we hear and feel the powerful winds, though we ſee them not, and perceive nor whence

they

they come, or whither they go: All have *felt* this who are born of the *Spirit*, *Joh.* 3. 8. God ſpake not like man when he ſaid, *Let there be Light*, *Gen.* 1. And he teacheth not like man, when his Spirit by his Word doth quicken, illuminate and regenerate ſouls. It is a ſure Covenant that hath ſuch an *inward Mediator*, ſuch an Agent, and Advocate, and Witneſs of Chriſt, ſpeaking operatively from God to man, and ſpeaking prevailingly in man to God.

4. And the ſure manner of Revelation doth make it fit to be our *Truſt* and *Joy*. As it beareth on it ſelf the Image or Impreſs of God's Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs; ſo by powerful Miracles, and manifold Wiſdome, and unmeaſurable Goodneſs it hath been delivered, ſealed, defended and propagated: And by a communicated ſpirit of *Life*, *Light* and *Love* in all ſound Believers, confirmed to this day.

5. And what is it that with ſuch glory and certainty is delivered to us from Heaven? It is a Deed of Gift (thus ſealed by Chriſt's Blood and Spirit) of *Grace* and *Glory*; of Chriſt to be our Head, and Lord, and Husband, and Life, in and

with

with him. *John* 5.10,12. of the free pardon of all our ſins how many and great ſoever, and of reconciliation with God, and of juſtification by the blood and righteouſneſs of our Redeemer, and of the continued teaching, preſerving, ſanctifying, ſtrengthening, comforting aid of the Holy Spirit; of adoption and title to the heavenly inheritance; that being ſons, and having the Spirit of the Son, by it we ſhall be ſealed up to Glory, and be made the habitation and temples of God: In a word, it is a *promiſe of this life*, ſo far as that *all things ſhall work together for our good*, Rom. 8.28. and *of the life which is to come*, where we ſhall live in glory with Chriſt for ever. This is the ſure and bleſſed Covenant of God.

6. And what is the *Doctrine* and *Laws* of God, are they not alſo ſuited to our *Truſt* and *Joy*? Is it not a delightful thing to read that which no meer man could tell us? How God made man and all the world, and what Laws he gave him? How ſin came into the world, and death by ſin? How God hath governed the world from the beginning, and how he hath redeemed us? What Chriſt is, and what he hath done, and what he will do? And what

man

man is, and what he *should be*, and what he *shall be*, and *do*, and *have* for ever.

And what is there in Gods Laws, but that which *is our safety*, and *should be our joy*? If good Laws be the safety and honour of Kingdoms, are not Gods Laws so to all the world? What an ugly Dungeon were the world without them? And what a worse than bruitish thing, were man? O how happy were Man, were Families, were Cities, were Kingdoms, if all had made Gods Laws their Rule, and all mens Laws and Lives had been ruled by them! Then there would have been none but *wise, just and holy Rulers*, that would have governed for God, and for the common good, and Princes would have been indeed the *Fathers of their Countries*, and Masters of their *Families*, abhorring all contradicting selfish interests, and all Injustice, Tyranny and Oppression. Then Subjects would have with reverence, readiness and fidelity, obeyed God, in obeying and honouring their Parents, Princes and Masters. Then all men would love their Neighbors as themselves, and do as they would be done by; Love and Justice would reign among all, and Injury, Partiality and Selfishness would be abhorred. And which of us cannot

cannot ſay, Had I been ruled by Gods Laws, I had eſcaped all the guilt, the ſhame, the corrections, the terrors that have befallen me: It is our ſin againſt that ſacred Rule, which is the cauſe of all our ſorrows; elſe what peace might we have had in our Conſciences, in our Bodies, in our Houſes, in our Cities and Countrey, as having peace with God. Gods ſtricteſt Laws, are but his ſtrict forbidding us to deſtroy or hurt our ſelves and others, as you forbid fire and water, and knives and gunpowder, ſurfetting and poyſon to your children, for their preſervation.

O how glad would every true Chriſtian be, if Gods Laws were fullier written on his heart, and he could but be and do all that God therein commandeth. For want of this *perfect Conformity* it is, that he cryeth out with *Paul*, Rom. 7. *To will is preſent with me, but to do I find not--O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death!*

How joyful ſhould we be if we could but *truſt God, and love him, and obey him*, and be free from ſin, as much as the Law of God commandeth us? We teſtifie therefore *that the Law is holy, and juſt, and good*, while we repent that we break it, and wiſh

viſh that we could better keep it: For his would keep our Souls from guilt and hame, and terrors, and our bodies from nuch calamity and pain; all Gods ways re pleaſantneſs, and all his paths are peace. Great peace have they that love his Law, nd nothing ſhall offend them; let *Papiſts* ide it, and accuſe it, and let the ignorant nd malignant ſcorn it, yet will Believers udge it fit for their confidence and de-ight.

7. And the rather, becauſe that all this is dmirably ſuited to our neceſſity. We are ndone ſinners! and had periſhed for ever, vithout a Saviour, and a pardoning Co-enant. We are dark and fooliſh, and hould have erred to damnation, without his ſure and heavenly Guide: We are be-et with Temptations, and how ſhould we vercome them, without Gods promiſe f better things than this world can give s; we are under manifold pains and ſor-ows, and muſt ſhortly dye: And how hould we undergo all this in peace, if we iad not hopes of future happineſs, and of hat which will compenſate all our loſſes: ve have a life of ſervice to God which nuſt be faithfully and chearfully done; nd how ſhould we ſo do it, without

good

good perſuaſion of this reward? *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.*

O then what a joyful word ſhould that be to us, which is ſent from God himſelf thus to guide, to ſecure, to ſtrengther and comfort us, by the promiſe of all that we need, and can well deſire, ſealed by the Blood, Miracles, and Spirit of Chriſt; and bearing the impreſs of God the Author, and that to ſuch miſerable ſinners as we are.

II. But how are Gods Teſtimonies our Heritage *for ever?* when in Heaven we ſhall have no need of Scriptures.

Anſ. 1. [*For ever*] ſometime ſignifieth, *to the end of my life*] as *David* ſaith, Pſal. 23: *I ſhall dwell in the houſe of the Lord for ever*; and ſo oft. And ſo Gods Teſtimonies were taken for his heritage, or chiefeſt portion, and rejoycing conſtantly, and to his lives end, as ſecuring him of an everlaſting heritage.

2. And the *heritage promiſed* by them, and *connoted*, is *everlaſting*; and the holi-

neſs

ſs imprinted by them on his Soul, will
e perpetuated, and perfected in Heaven.

III. *What is it for Believers to take*
ods Teſtimonies for their heritage?

Anſ. It is ſuppoſed that the flattering
orld, and the pleaſures of the fleſh, do
and here in competition, and are by many
ken for *their beſt*, and this becauſe they
ther *think not of*, or *believe* not the bet-
r things of a life to come, and the com-
rts of a holy proſpect and preparation.
this caſe every true Believer, ſeriouſly
eighing all, and what can be ſaid on both
des, what the world and fleſh will be and
o for him, and what God and grace, and
ory will be and do, doth wiſely diſcern
d reſolve,

1. That the world is vanity, and ſin
ominable.

2. That God is all-ſufficient, infinitely
od, and to be truſted, and his word moſt
iſe and juſt, and true: And therefore
ough his belief have its imperfections
d aſſaults, yet he ſo far believeth Gods
omiſes to be ſure, and his precepts to be
od and neceſſary, as that he reſolveth
re to place his hope and truſt for his
whole

whole felicity in this life and hereafter, and to give up himself to the study, love and obedience of Gods Laws, as the *guid and security, and comfort* of his Soul, renouncing all the flatteries of the flesh and world which stand against it, and are preferred by sensual Unbelievers.

In few words, this was *Davids* faith and choice, and this is the faith and choice of all true Believers, by which we may discern whether we are such; though all have not the *same degeee* of trust and fixed resolution, yet all have this much in sincerity.

IV Quest. *But can all say, They are the Rejoycing of my heart?*

Ans. All of them can say,

1. We *see* that there is in the Word and Covenant of God in Christ, unspeakably more *matter fit to be our joy*, than in all the pleasures, and wealth, and honours of this world.

2. And therefore we *prefer* it before them all, in our *desire* and our *fixed choice*.

3. And

3. And we find so much *goodness and sa-*
bleness to us in this sacred Word, as that
e *love it* as our *food* and our *security*,
ough not with the appetite and love
hich we desire.

4. And though we have not that joy in
is our love to it, and in the hopes of
omised glory, which a *stronger faith and*
ve would cause, yet we find that it is our
st, and we perceive more good in it than
sinful pleasures; and the true and chief
pport of our Souls in all our fears and
roubles, and in our prospect of another
fe is from the love and word of God
rough Christ.

And though our pleasure in it be not
nsual and luscious, it is much more solid
d satisfying to our Souls, than we find in
y other thing.

And the sweetness which we taste
it, is greater at some times than at
ther.

And the comfort which we have in
r bodily health and welfare, is much
it signifieth to us the love of God
rforming to us his promises, and he lp-
g us to serve him with joy and glad ess,
order to everlasting joy.

This is the ordinary case of true Believers; though extraordinarily; 1. Some tempted, troubled, melancholy Christians overwhelmed with grief and fears, do not perceive this much in themselves. 2. And the healthfuller stronger sort of Christians have yet a more sweet and constant pleasure, in the testimonies and waies of God.

Having said this much for *Explication*, a little more may suffice to shew you *why* and *whence* it is that *Believers* receive the Testimonies of God with this fixed *Choice*, and *Trust*, and *Pleasure*.

1. It is from *honest Self-Love* and *Interest*: They certainly find that it is *their best*; that it is *true* and *good*, and that there is nothing else to be found in this world, that will serve instead of it, to be a quieting security, guide and comfort to the soul. They perceive what *they need*; and that nothing else can supply those needs: This must be their Hope, or they must despair.

2. It is from *Holy Suitableness* and *Love* to God, and the Goodness which they relish in his Word. As God giveth every living creature an *Appetite* suitable to his food, and benefits, so doth he to the

New

New Creature. *Holiness* is mostly the souls Appetite to God, and Spiritual Good. The word which promiseth and guideth us to the incorruptible Crown of glory, is an incorruptible seed, 1 *Pet.* 1.3, 4, 5, 6. and it is our milk or food, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. and by it we are made partakers of the *divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. and it is the *ingrafted or innaturalized word which is able to save our souls*, Jam. 1. 21. And as the whole stock is marvellously turned to serve a little *graft*, which is planted into it, and as if it had lost its former kind, doth bring forth only the fruit of the graft, so is Gods Word implanted in us to the change of our *nature*, and our *fruits*. And it is no sound Appetite which hath no pleasure. No wonder if a strong belief do cause us *to rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, that we may receive the end of our faith, our salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7, 8.

All Gods Commands and Promises have by the divine impression of them on our souls, left somewhat there which is like them, and connatural; even a *holy light* to understand their truth and goodness, and a *holy love* to them, and the things revealed, to *desire them*, and *take pleasure*

in them, and a *holy liveliness* to pursue the good desired. And this is the writing of the Law and Gospel on our hearts: And in this sense it may be said that God, that Christ, that the Holy Ghost is in our souls, and dwel'eth in us, even as an *efficient* principle, and a beloved object, and desired end. And if this be all that they intend, those called *Quakers* have no reason to accuse us, for not preaching a God, and a Christ within us. And if this be it that is meant by those who tell the world, that by saying that the *Holy Ghost is in us*, we are more arrogant than the Pope, that claimeth a visible Monarchy; we glory in this joyful priviledge, this earnest, seal and first-fruits of heavenly glory, and humbly thank him who hath vouchsafed it, and assured us of it in his word, *Rom.* 8. 9, 11. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *Ephes.* 3. 17. 1 *John* 4. 13. 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. 2 *Tim.* 1. 14. 1 *John* 3. 24. & 4. 12, 15. 16. And if the Scorners have any belief of the Scriptures, let them read and tremble, *Rom.* 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his.*

III. I have given you the sense and the reason of this doctrine: we come hither to

to learn what use to make of it. And I think if I preach also on the *Copy* or *Impress* of this Text, whose Reliques we have laid in the dust, and tell us *what use she made of such Doctrine*, it will be a considerable help to our own Application.

I have never loved or used to adorn Sepulchers, or hang out specious Signs at the doors of Pride, Ambition, Tyranny, or worldliness, to entice others to imitate prosperous sinners in their sin: were I to preach at the Funerals of an *Alexander*, or a *Cæsar*, I had rather say that which may save the living from following them in Pride and Bloodshed, than to tempt men to the like sin and misery.

To praise damned men, because they had the pleasures of sin for a season, is to be more foolish and uncharitable, than the tormented Gentleman, *Luke* 16. who would have had one sent from the dead to warn his Brethren, lest they should follow him to that place of torment, by preferring fleshly pleasure and prosperity, before the life and hope of Saints. Our praises ease not tormented souls. It is a mark of the Citizens of the holy City, *That a vile person is contemned in their eyes*; but withall,

That they honour those that fear the Lord: for God doth honour them.

My duty therefore to God, and my love to holiness, and holy persons, and to you in special that are her Children, and other Relations, commandeth me to tell you, (though some of you know it better than I) That our deceased Friend, in the course of her Pilgrimage, did speak of her self by her constant practice, what *David* professed in this Text. Though I speak but from eighteen or nineteen years acquaintance with her my self, I have full evidence of it for the former part of her life. And my acquaintance with her by Neighborhood, and mutual esteem, hath been such as hath given me more advantage to know her, than most have had: though I remember not ever to have *spoken with one person that hath known her, that did not take her for an extraordinary and eminent example of the Piety and Virtues* which I shall mention.

If the Hypocrites seek the praise of men, verily they have their reward (a poor reward) but she seeking first the Kingdom of God, and the honour that is of him, had this cast in as overplus: I never heard that any person of any persuasion

ſuaſion did ſpeak evil of her, or queſtion her eminent ſincerity and worth.

Had ſhe come to this by *ſinful compliance*, She might have feared Chriſts words, *Luke* 6. 26. *Wo to you when all men ſpeak well of you.* But as God hath not left himſelf without witneſs to the very Heathens, ſo he hath not left innocency, wiſdom, love, peace and piety, without ſome witneſſes in the conſciences of the ungodly; few of them have the face to ſpeak againſt theſe in their proper names: And if he could not diſhonour them by our mixed faults, and by the ſlanderous affixed names of Hereſie, Schiſm, Diſobedience, Hypocriſie, Phanaticiſm, Folly, and what elſe ignorance and malignity can deviſe, the Devil knew not how to diſhonour holineſs and virtue, nor to encourage the blind world to ſo common a hatred and oppoſition of them, as they ſhew in all Nations of the earth.

When She choſe this Text, it was from ſuch a ſutable ſpirit, as all men chooſe the food, the friends and company, the buſineſs and diſcourſe which by agreeableneſs they moſt delight in. That She made Gods Word and Covenants (connoting Gods Love, Chriſt, Grace and Glory, the

ſpring, matter and end) her beſt, her heritage, her all contemning all that ſtood in competition, and that theſe were the rejoycing of her heart, She ſhewed to us that knew Her by theſe notable effects.

I. By her conſtant, ſerious, diligent uſe of the Word of God, by hearing, reading, conference and meditation. Her food was not more conſtantly uſed, nor I believe ſo ſweet to her. Her hearing in the the publick Aſſemblies, nothing but neceſſity could interrupt: And her private conſtancy her relations know. She practically told us that the bleſſed mans *delight is in the Law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night*, Pſal. 1. 2.

II. She *made ſo much*, (in eſteem, uſe and thankfulneſs) of *every little* of the help She could get in theſe ſpiritual things, as ſhewed that they were her heritage and joy. When ſome come home with *accuſations* of the Sermon, as *dry, dull, or weak*, She found in it ſomething for profit and ſolace: I am ſure my own converſation and duties have been truly guilty of the foreſaid faults, and yet how gladly would She come over the way

to

to us at prayer-time. How much did She value now and then a little (too dull unprofitable) conference, and took it for a loss that She could have no more. How glad was She of now and then a too dry and short Letter, and how carefully would She keep them. As if with the Woman of *Canaan*, She had been begging for the crums. Alas our duller appetites seldome so desire after, or delight in, much larger portions of well drest food, but fulness hath loathing, and we call it *dry manna*, which we are weary of; or every little fault in the dressing turneth our stomach against it; full souls loaths the honey-comb, but to the hungry every bitter thing is sweet.

III. She loved and received the Word of God from *any faithful Minister that brought it*: Its true that She *more frequented and desired* some than others: But her Religion was not faction, or siding with this party or with that: She was far from a Shismatical mind or practice. When one party separate from all that Preach in the Parish Churches, and another from all that Preach elsewhere, She separated from neither.

IV. Accordingly She loved all persons that feared God as such: not confining her affections or kindness to those of this or that controvertible opinion: But that candour and holy simplicity, and serious practical religion which She had her self, was it that She loved in all others whomsoever.

V. And accordingly her *conference* was not about *controversies*, or matters of contention, which too many spend their hours in these times, but that which tendeth to edification, and to administer grace to the hearers: She was not such as *Paul* oft reproveth for *striving about words*, and little things, that tend not to edifie but subvert.

VI. Much less was She tainted with any Heresie, or dangerous Errour in Religion, nor ever drawn from the truth, and her spiritual stedfastness; but cleaved to the form of wholsome words, and the simplicity that is in Christ, and to them that held the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; avoiding the vain janglings of men of Contention, Pride and Corrupt minds.

VII.

VII. She was not of a cenſorious backbiting temper, nor uſed as too many faulty Chriſtians, to make it her diſcourſe, to find fault with others, and make her ſelf the judge of Controverſies, Caſes, Actions and Perſons which She underſtood not: but had learned that leſſon, [*ſpeak evil of no man,*] and to *know* and *be called* to it, before She *judged*.

VIII. She was very deſirous of the good of all, and glad of any thing which tended to promote the converſion and ſaving of mens ſouls.

IX. She was charitable and liberal alſo to their bodies; in an unuſual degree: as I am able to ſay by particular experience, in which I have known it exerciſed to the poor.

X. Her humility, and deteſtation of pride was manifeſt, not only in her garb, and behaviour, but in her low thoughts of her ſelf, and the lowlineſs of all her converſation, and great diſlike of all that ſavoured of pride.

XI. She was not morose, nor a refuser of converse or useful visits, when reason required them: but She took it for a great affliction to have much diversion by company or by matters, from her constant course of better work: And (besides her health) was therefore the more inclined to be much in the Country, that her mind and time might not be at the mercy of too much intruding diversions, and unprofitable discourse.

XII. Much more was She averse to all sorts of *sensuality*: such pleasing of the flesh as corrupteth the mind, and turneth it from holy work and pleasure; and such vain recreations as waste precious time, and profit not our selves or others: Holy things were her food and feast, her work and recreation.

XIII. Her *prudence* in all matters, was very exemplary; being much more against unadvised rashness, and actions which tend to ill effects, than most of us of the stranger sex: and I confess I should think much better of my self if I could equal her herein. In which her acquain-

tance

ance commonly admired her, though this is a point which all must acknowledg much imperfection in.

XIV. And her gentleness, meekness and calmness of mind and carriage was very amiable to her friends and most that did converse with her: She was a great adversary to passionate behaviour, which surely came from that power of grace, which had made love and meekness become a nature in her, seeing no such thing could be else expected in one of her sex and complection, and bodily weaknesses.

XV. She did not as the hypocrite, give God the second place in her heart and life, and the World the first, nor put off Christ with the leavings of the flesh, nor take this World for her best or heritage, and the next only for a reserve when She must needs leave this: She seemed to prize no heritage but God, nor to set much by any transitory vanity whatever.

XVI. She excelled in the earnest desire of her Childrens good, and in the care of their

their well doing and ſalvation. How oft hath She deſired me to pray for them? How glad was She if I would at any time but converſe with them, and adviſe them: they know better themſelves (though I know much) how much She prayed for them? How oft and tenderly She Counſelled them? What Letters of ſerious holy Counſel She would write to them? And how like She was to *Job*, who prayed and ſacrificed for his Children when they were merry and feaſting together, fearing leſt they ſhould forget God and ſin againſt him?

XVII. This kind of life which I have deſcribed *was her calling and trade*, and in a manner her *only buſineſs in the World*: It was not now and then in a good mood, like a feaſt or recreation: but as She knew that *one thing is needful*, ſo She choſe that *better part*, which never was, nor will be taken from her. She ſo lived as if She had but *this one thing to mind and do in the World*, to pleaſe God by obeying him, and to cleave to Chriſt; and to do good and to be ſaved. Nothing elſe ſeemed to be much in her mind, thoughts care and buſineſs; her *life* ſeemed to be but *this one*

thing.

thing. But I must confess that poor and tempted Persons, that are under many worldly wants, crosses and employments, cannot be expected to reach her measure in this: Though *one thing* be their *best and portion*, they may be tost with many troublesome cares and businesses. But God gave her both *mind*, *opportunity and help* to live in as even a course of constant holiness in a Family, as Monks can pretend to or hope for in their Community or solitude. Religion was her very life.

XVIII. In this life She had also a *Constant peace of Conscience*, bewailing her *imperfections*, but not living in melancholy, despair, hard thoughts of God, or an uncomfortable sort of Religion: I have oft heard her speak of her lamented weakness of Faith, Love and heavenly desires and joy, but never that I remember one doubting word of her own sincerity and salvation: But her ordinary speech was lamenting that we were all so weak in our belief of the Word of God, and the unseen world, and what excellent Persons we should be if herein we had a stronger Faith that were liker unto sight; and how much it should be the business

of

of all believers, to pray and labour for an increased powerful belief hereof, as that which would set all right in us.

XIX. Her patience under her bodily infirmities also was exemplary. Her weakness made her so lyable to dangerous Coughs while She was in *London* air, that by this She was constrained to live much from home. And most of all her life She was tormented with a frequent head-ach: But in her patience in all this She did possess her Soul; and patience furthered experience, and experience hope, and She learnt more the quiet fruits of righteousness by being much exercised herein.

XX. And as by this She daily learned to dye, so the expectation and preparation for death, was her continual work and state. She lived and heard, and prayed, and wrote her Letters to her Children as at the brink of the Grave, and the Door of Eternity. Not that her Diseases did seem to us to be very mortal, or threaten this sudden change. But she knew the brevity of mans life, and that Death is ready to remove us all, and what

a mo-

t moment it is till that certain hour.
And as She lived holily and in peace
with God and man, so She dyed with
ase and *little likelyhood* of the ordinary
miseries of *Fear or Pain*: A little soreness
and swelling of her Leg, and pain towards
the Hip, turned to two swooning fits, and
in the third or fourth, having been in
quiet discourse with her Husband, She
is quietly sunk and dyed away; desiring
that I should be sent to pray with her; She
was dead before I came, without any
signs of natures striving: And She had
said to her Daughter after her former
fits, She did not think that one could
have dyed so easily as She had almost
done. A death *thus expected*, and thus
prepared for, is not to be called *sudden*!
Thus God can make death easie to some
of us, that are apt to over-fear the an-
tecedent pain. And now what can be
more, (almost) desired *in this world*,
than such a life and such a death. Our
dear Friend is at home with Christ, and
Gods will, which is Goodness and Love
it self, is so fulfilled; even that will
which must dispose of all things, and in
which only we must seek our rest.

And

And having described this true Copy o the Text, I may boldly speak of it to several sorts.

I. I may again ask both *Quakers* and *Scorners*, Whether the Holy Spirit do not *dwell* and *work* in such among us, as our dear Friend now deceased was.

II. I may ask *Unbelievers* and *Sadducees*, Whether these operations of the Spirit of God on Believers, be not a sign that God owneth the Gospel by which he thus worketh? And that Christ liveth and reigneth, who can thus still send a sanctifying Spirit into Believers Souls? And whether it be not blasphemy to think and say, either that these excellent endowments of Souls are not of God, or that he giveth them all in vain, and that Believers are all deceived by God, and labour and hope all their days for that which hath no being; and that the *better* God maketh them, the more *deluded*, *vain* and *frustrate* he maketh them, and ruleth and amendeth the world by *falshood*.

III. I may ask the *Papists*, with what face they can say as they use to do, *That*

they

ey never heard of a Proteſtant Saint? And hether we may not be as *Religious* in the aces that God hath ſet us in, as if we rned Recluſes, Monks or Nuns, and ſhut our ſelves from doing any good in the orld.

IV. I may ask the *Malignant* that call ſerious Godlineſs *Hypocriſie*, Whether h a life as this doth ſavor of diſſimulati- ? And whether ſuch *Serioufneſs* and *Hy- criſie* are not contraries, and *Hypocriſie* not a *Profeſſion* without that *Serioufneſs* hich is ſincerity? And whether they that Baptiſm ſolemnly vow to take God for eir God, and Chriſt for their Lord and viour, and the Holy Ghoſt for Chriſts dvocate and Witneſs, and their Sanctifier d Comforter, and to renounce the Fleſh, e World and the Devil, and when they ve done, perform none of this which ey vowed, but live to the Fleſh and orld which they renounced, and take a ly life as needleſs, yea and hate it; I ſay, nether theſe be not the impudent Hypo- ites that vow and profeſs that holineſs hich they abhor, rather than they that th all their diligence perform the holy ow which they have made. And if Wives pro-

promiſe Fidelity to their Husbands, Se
vants to their Maſters, and Subjects
their Princes, are they the Hypocrites th
are ſerious and keep their promiſe? (
they that were never ſerious in it, but ſee
the keeping of it?

V. And as to thoſe malignant perſo
that take this ſtrict and ſerious diligen
for mens ſouls, to be but *ſcrupuloſity*, or th
character of ſome *over-zealous Bigots*
Puritans who are moſt inclined to Schiſ
and to be troubleſom or dangerous
States; I ask them,

1. What is there in all the deſcriptio
which I have here truly given you, whic
is injurious or dangerous to Church
State, or any perſon? Will it hurt any or
that God and men are ſeriouſly loved? an
that Gods teſtimonies are truſted and de
lighted in and obeyed? and that God
Kingdom and Righteouſneſſe is fir
ſought?

2. Is it not Chriſt, and Chriſtianity, an
Scripture that you accuſe? If it be ſchi
matical and dangerous to be ſerious in per
forming what we profeſs and vow, ſurel
it is bad in Baptiſm to vow it, and ſtill b
calling our ſelves Chriſtians to profeſs it

T

o accuſe, hate and ſcorn the ſerious Pra-
ice of your own profeſt Religion, is to
: the moſt fooliſh Self-condemners, and
ſome reſpects worſe than Mahometans,
fidels and Heathens.

VI. But my moſt earneſt deſire is to
ou the *loving Husband*, and *beloved Chil-
ren* of our departed Friend; that you
ill not overlook,

1. The *Correction*,
2. The *Sin*,
3. The *Mercy*,
4. Or the *Duty* which God now cal-
leth you ſeriouſly to conſider.

(1.) I need not perſuade ſuch as are
ther apt to overmuch ſorrow, not to *de-
ſe* this chaſtening of the Lord, but ra-
er not to faint under his rebuke. But I
nnot diſſuade you from a *juſt* ſenſe of
ur loſs, we that are your Neighbors
el it; but you much more, to whom it
much greater: what Saints in Heaven
o *know* of us, or *think* of us, or *do* for
, we ſhall better know when we are
ere: But *here* you are deprived of the
ily prayers which She ſent up for you;

of

of the continuance of her loving care
your Souls, and watchfulneſs over you;
her wiſe and faithful counſels to you, an
of her imitable example; as it was ſtill be
fore you; a Husband of a pious pruden
helper, and children of a tender affectio
nate Mother; your great ſorrows tell m
you feel your loſs.

(2.) And all *correction* is *for ſin*, whic
is worſe than ſuffering; O fall down be
fore God, and with penitent tears bewa
your ſin, which hath cauſed your loſs
humbly confeſs how unworthy you wer
of ſuch a Mother, and beg of God to for
give that ſin.

(3.) But *Mercy* alſo as well as *Si*
and *Loſs* muſt be acknowledged. You
ſorrow muſt give due place to *thankfulnes*
and *comfort*. Your Mother is taken fro
you, but remember

1. What a mercy it was and is to you
that you are ſo *related* to ſuch Parents, ſee
ing God hath promiſed ſpecial mercy t
the Faithful and their Seed; and if any o
you miſs it, it will be through your ow
ingratitude and contempt.

2. Wha

2. What a mercy is it that all her pray-
s for you are yet in force, and more of
e answer of them may yet be sent you,
you reject it not?

3. You have yet all her holy counsels
remember, and they may profit you
hile you live.

4. And though She be gone, I hope her
ample will never be forgotten by
u.

5. And what a mercy is it, that under
her infirmities, you enjoyed her so
ng?

6. And yet how much greater cause of
ankfulness have you, that She so lived
d so dyed, and that you may think of
r with comfort as being with Christ, and
pe to be with her for ever. Every one
th had a *Mother*, but every one had not
ch a Mother as you have had.

(4) And I have intimated your *Duty*,
hile I have mentioned your *Loss* and
ercy.

1. Think over often what Sin she repro-
d in you, and what counsel she gave
u, and now revive your resolution to o-
y it.

2. Remember what She was wont to
pray

pray for on your behalf; and let it no now be long of your neglect or wilfulnes that you are without it.

3. Remember her humble, moderate holy example; and think whether you Souls have not as much need of th greateſt care and diligence as hers had And why ſhould not you be as ſtudious t pleaſe God, and make ſure of Heaven a She was? Bleſs God that you have ſuch a pattern, that hath ſo long dwelt with you for your imitation, next your imitation o Chriſt: Holy ſimplicity is deſpiſed by the world, but it will prove the only wiſdom at the laſt.

I have told you what uſe to make of the example of our deceaſed Friend: Let me now tell you what uſe to make of the Text which ſhe ſo much loved, tranſcribed and choſe.

I. And firſt here you may learn, the nature of true Faith, and ſound Religion: It taketh Gods teſtimonies and promiſes for our heritage, and for the comfort of our hearts. It is not true Faith, unleſs we ſo truſt Gods promiſes for this life and that to come, as to take what *he promiſeth*

ſeth for our *beſt* and our *inheritance*, d his *promiſe* for our beſt ſecurity and le, and his Law for our governing le that we may obtain it.

So that, 1. Here you ſee how we differ m *Infidels*, that do not *truſt* their erlaſting hopes and happineſs on the omiſe of God.

2. And how we differ from hypocrites o ſpeak beſt of Heaven, but really k for their beſt on earth: which Chriſt leth [*Truſting in their Riches*,] beſe that is indeed their truſt, from ich they have their greateſt expecta-ns, and for which they moſt labour and ll leave all; this a believer doth for *miſed* happineſs: And this the worldly pocrite doth for the proſperity of the ſh on Earth,

3. And here you ſee that faith and god-eſs are not melancholy uncomfortable ngs, as the Devil and the fleſh would ſwade unexperienced fools and un-ievers: Unleſs it be ſad to have ſecurity m God of a Heavenly heritage, and oice therein.

And here you ſee the differences be-een the mirth of a fleſhly Infidel and of elieving Saint: One is like a drunkard that

that is merry for an hour in a bruitiſh kind of befooling pleaſure; or like one that hath a pleaſant dream; or one that heareth a jeaſt or merry tale, or ſeeth a pretty Comedy or ſhew: The other is more rational and heart contenting than it ſhould be to any one of you, to have good ſecurity for many hundred years life and health and proſperity here on Earth; ſuch a birth-right do prophane fools ſell for ſuch a morſel; not knowing that the fear of God cauſed by true Faith is the beginning of wiſdom.

2. Hence therefore we may learn how to try our ſincerity of Faith. Doth it make us take Gods promiſe and the thing promiſed as our heritage? Though we are not without temptations to doubting, nay nor without the remnants of unbelief, but our hearts are troubled when we look beyond death with many fears, yet if we ſo far truſt Gods Word, as reſolvedly to take it for that which we will adhere to, and lay our chiefeſt hopes upon, we have a Faith that will entitle us to the promiſed benefits.

Obj. But ſome may ſay, I cannot ſay that it is the *Rejoicing of my heart.*

Anſ.

Anſ. 1. Can you ſay that you take it for that in which you *place* and *ſeek* your joy, though you cannot yet attain it? And that you preſer not any other pleaſure in your eſteem and choice and ſeeking? If ſo, you ſhew that you truly believe and truſt to the faithfulneſs of Gods Word, though yet you reach not what you ſeek. Deſire is the firſt fruit of Faith and Love, and holy joy is the flower and perfection.

2. Cannot you ſay that it is this word that maketh you hope that there is for man a better life, and that you ſhall not periſh like the beaſts? And that your fears and ſorrows are ſomewhat abated by the promiſes of God?

3. Cannot you ſay that you perceive a pleaſing goodneſs in the Word of God, which maketh it welcome and acceptable to you?

By what I have mentioned, you may find,

1. That the word hath not been in vain unto you, when it hath cauſed ſuch effects.

2. And that the ſame ſpirit is in you which wrote the Word: or elſe you would not love and deſire it, and take it for ſuitable food and pleaſure, yea, your heritage and joy.

3. And you may hence perceive that you are not without the love of God himſelf, though you ſee him not, and have not ſuch ſenſible conceptions of him as you have of men and things which you have ſeen: For if you love truth and goodneſs and holineſs in Gods Word, becauſe it is ſuch, you ſure love beſt the *greateſt* truth, goodneſs and holineſs, and that is God.

4. And hence you may percieve that though our nature love not death, and a weak Faith will not overcome all fears, when we think of coming into an unſeen world, yet really you are lovers of Heaven, in that you are lovers of that which conſtituteth Heaven, and is its deſirableneſs to man; even *holineſs* and Gods Love and glorious preſence, and our perpetual joy herein. If you deſire this, you deſire Heaven, though the fear of death do make you doubt of it.

5. And hence you may find that you are not worldly hypocrites: elſe it is not Gods Promiſes, and Law that you would take for your heritage and joy; but worldly proſperity and fleſhly pleaſure, and God and Heaven ſhould have but the leavings of the fleſh, for fear of an after reckoning at death.

6. And

6. And though your joy be small, you may know that it is of the right kind, when it is chiefly sought in Gods Love and promises; and you would not let go the Word of God, and lose your part in it for all the vanities of this World.

III. Hence also you may learn why all true Christians so much value the Testimonies or Word of God? Why they so much read it, think of it, talk of it, and hear of it; and are loth that Papists should corrupt it, or conceal it in an unknown tongue; or that any should deny them the necessary use of it, or silence the Ministers that Preach it to them? who would willingly be deprived of his heritage, or heart rejoicing?

IV. Yea, indeed hence we see, *how much we should set by it, and use it*, how dear it should be to us? How strictly we should obey it? With what delight we should read it and meditate in it? How diligent we should be to confirm our belief of it, and how we should fetch our hope and comfort from it, in life and at our death?

V. And you may see hence, that it is no wonder that the Devil and all his Servants in the World are enemies to the Word of God, because they are enemies to our heritage and joy: And there are few better signs while many pretend to be for Christ, to know who are really for him, and who are against him and his greatest enemies; than to judge of men as they further or hinder; Love or Hate the Word of God as to its proper use, as the heritage and joy of holy souls.

VI. But the chief part of my application is, to commend this wise and holy choice, and solid comfort to you all; and to beseech you presently to imitate *David*, and turn away from all inconsistent pleasures. If you live in sorrow or deceit, and die in desperation, it is not for want of an offer from God of better things. Have you lived hitherto as thus resolved? If you have, the Lord confirm you, and be sure such hopes shall not deceive you. If you have not, what will you now choose and do? If you live not to some *end*, you live not like men, according to reason: If you have chosen what end to live for and seek, what is it? Consider, I beseech

beseech you, of these things following before it be too late.

1. What will you take for your heritage, or your best, if not the future promised joyes, and what will you *take* for your *security* but Gods Word? What is it that you place your chiefest hopes in? shall health, and wealth, and pleasure to the flesh, and honour among men, be taken for your heritage? Dare you under your hands make a Covenant for these to quit all your hopes of the life to come? if not, which is it that you prefer, and which would you quit, if one must be hazarded or lost? which hath the neerest and highest place in your hearts? which seek you first, and make all other things give place to? O Sirs, it is a shame to our stupid hearts, that we have need to be so oft told by Preachers, that *we must dye*, and that our flesh must shortly lie neglected in dust and darkness, till the resurrection, and that we and all the deceitful trifles of this World are ready to part for ever! It is a shame that we must be oft told that which every Fool and Child at the use of reason may know, how poor and how short an heritage or pleasure all those have, who have no better than this World can give them. What

What say you, Will you die in *Hope*, or in *Despair?* If Unbelief make you hope that there is no Hell, yet *Hope* of *Heaven* you can have none, unless you trust the Word of God? The light of Nature indeed is such a natural Word or Revelation, as may tell us much of a future life of retribution; but Gods supernatural revelation is so much clearer, that we cannot expect that he will see by a lesser, who wilfully rejects a greater light: sure all men would live for ever if they could, and all would be for ever happy: you would not sure die like Dogs, without any hope of a better life hereafter, if you could have good security for such hopes? And what better security is there to be found, by mortal men, than [*the Promises of God, confirmed by Christs Blood and Miracles, and by the Seal of his holy Spirit.*]

In a word, without all doubt, "*Either* "*Heaven must be your Heritage, or you* "*must have none that is worthy of a serious* "*thought, and enough to keep a man from* "*wishing that he had never been born, or* "*been a Brute, that had not reason to know* "*the matter of his griefs and fears. And* "*either Gods Word seconding the light of* "*Nature,*

"*Nature, must give you hopes of a better "life, or you must live and dye in meer de-"spair.*] And shall that be your wilful choice?

2. Consider how unvaluable a mercy it is, to man, yea, to sinful miserable man, that God should vouchsafe to give him such an everlasting Heritage, and such security for it, and that on the meer thankful acceptance of the sinner. And how worthily will they be undone, that by wilful refusal are deprived of freely offered Felicity?

3. And consider, how *suitable* an Heritage and Security it is that is offered us, and how fit for our joyful acceptance and esteem.

The thing promised is no less than endless glory with God our Redeemer, and all the blessed: it is in the world where we must be for ever! It is the perfection of that which every holy Soul desireth: It is *our best, our all*; it must be that or nothing; that or Hell.

The Word or Covenant which is our Trust,

1. Is Gods own Word.

2. It perfecteth and ſecondeth natural revelation and hope.

3. It beareth on it ſelf the impreſs of God, even his power, wiſdom and love, in wonders, prophecies and grace : it is ſealed by the blood of Chriſt ; by his own and his Diſciples multitude of miracles ; and by the gift of his ſanctifying Spirit to all true Believers to the end : It is confirmed to our Souls by the experience of the power of it, and the bleſſed effects, and this indwelling Spirit, the witneſs of Chriſt; and by the anſwer of prayers, by many providences, and by the experience of all Believers to this day.

It is excellently ſuited to all our needs; to our wants, our dangers, our fears, our doubts, yea, and our ſinful unworthineſs in the freeneſs of Gods mercy, and all his gifts.

Indeed man had rather live by ſight, and would fain know by ſeeing, whither Souls go, and what they are, and have and do hereafter. But it is not we, but God hat i s the Ruler, and fitteſt to chooſe both the gift and means, the end and way : If we thankfully truſt and improve a promiſe, we ſhall quickly ſee, and have poſſeſſion. Bleſſed be God for the light of his

his Gospel, to guide us up to the light of glory. O that we had hearts to trust it, love it, and rejoice in it, as we have just cause.

4. And is it not a great mercy of God, that he hath herein called us *to a life of happiness and present joy*? If he had bid us only weep for sin to the last breath, the condition had been easie as for pardon and hope of endless mercy; but he hath given us a word, which he would have to be the *rejoycing of our hearts*; and do we not love joy? or have we any better?

I have not now time, and I much more want my self such a mind and heart as I should have, to tell what cause of daily joy God hath given us in his word and Covenants. But this I will tell you, that our want of joy is our daily sin and shame, as well as our loss and suffering; and among all the discoveries of the sinful weakness of our Faith, Hope and Love, our want of rejoycing in the word of promise, and hope of glory, is not the less? O what an Enemy is death in this respect, that standing between it, darkneth and affrighteth us from our joys: But Christ hath conquered death, to deliver those that

through fear of it are subject to bondage, *Hebr.* 2. 14. And though we cry, O miserable men, who shall deliver us? we yet thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And I must second the testimony of our deceased Friend, in professing for your encouragement, my own experience, I have taken Gods Testimonies for my Heritage, and they have been these Fifty Years, or near, the pleasure of my life, and sweeter than Honey, and preciouser than thousands of gold and silver. As we tell men in charity of the things which we have found good, the Medicines that have healed us, and commend the persons that have been friendly to us, and as man's nature is inclined to propagate the knowledge, and communicate the good which we partake of, and grace increaseth this inclination; so I take it to be my duty, to add herein my own experience, if it may contribute to the determining of your choice: and reason teacheth all men to regard that means and remedy and good the more, which many have had experience of; and it is not to be taken for vain ostentation, to profess that which all must have in some degree that will be saved.

Though

Though the natural and sinful fears of pain and death, too long deprived me of much of the joy which I should have had in the thoughts of the unseen world, and too much doth so to this day, yet I must say that the *Word of God*, and the *persons* that love and practise it, and the holy way of life and peace, and all the means and things that here savor of Heaven, have been so good and pleasant to me, as enableth me to assure you, that on earth there is nothing so worthy of your desire and joy.

And to encourage you, I will tell you by my own experience, what benefit may be expected from this kind of delight, agreeable to *Davids* and our Friends experience.

1. By this means my life hath been almost a constant pleasure.

2. This pleasure hath much upheld me under almost constant bodily infirmity and pain.

3. It hath made all my sufferings from men, and crosses in the world, to be tolerable and very easie to me; had not Gods Word been my delight, I had lived uncomfortably, in constant pains and sorrows, and had perished in my trouble.

4. It

4. It hath saved me from the snares of sinful pleasures: mans nature will seek for some delight, and they that have it not in good will, seek it in things hurtful and forbidden; it is only greater things that can overcome our mistaken choice of lesser. In my childhood I was sinfully inclined to the pleasure of Romances, and of childish Sports; but when I tasted the sweetness of Gods testimonies and wayes, I needed no other, but spit out those luscious unwholsom vanities. And though common knowledge, called Learning, be pleasant to mans nature, and I cannot say that I have not overvalued it, yet I must say, that the relish of these greater matters, hath made me see how much of it is vanity, and hath saved me from the pursuit of that part of it which doth but please curiosity and fancy, and tendeth not to use and to greater things; and sensual pleasures I had no need of.

5. It hath by this means made that pleasure which I had, to be such as my reason did approve and justifie, whereas if I had sought it in preferment, wealth or sensuality, a foreseeing Conscience would have affrighted me out of all my pleasure, and I should have had more of the pricks

than

than of the Rose; of the sting, than of the Honey. Of this pleasure you need not fear too much; but of the sensual pleasure, we more easily catch a mortal surfeit.

6. This sweetness of Gods Word, hath made also my *calling* and *daily labor* sweet; so that it had my heart, and not my forced hand and tongue.

7. And this hath helpt my *constancy* herein: For when we have no delight in our work, we grow weary; and weariness tendeth to give it over, or to do it heartlesly, and slubber it over in unacceptable hypocrisie.

8. And this hath much saved me from the sinful loss of time; pleasure causeth trifling and delays; who needeth vain pastimes, that delighteth in Gods Word and Work?

9. And this hath been to me an excellent help for the increase of knowledge: For the mysteries of godliness have still more to be learned by the wisest man; and as Boys at School, so the Scholars of Christ, learn best who have most pleasure in their Books.

10. And this pleasure hath much confirmed my belief of the truth of Scripture,

pture, when it hath born its own witneſs to my mind, and I have taſted that goodneſs which is agreeable to its truth. I eaſily believe him that commendeth a thing to me, when I taſte or feel that it is good.

11. And this pleaſure hath helped me againſt vain thoughts and talk, while the truths of God were ſweet, and ſo continually welcome; it's eaſie to think of that which we delight in; and ſinful delights corrupt the thoughts and ſpeech with conſtant ſin.

12. And this pleaſure hath ſomewhat fed my daily *thankfulneſs* to God, in the conſtant experience of the goodneſs of his truth and ways.

13. And it cured the error of my beginnings, when I ſtrove for nothing ſo much as to weep for ſin, and perceived not that the joy of the Lord is our ſtrength, and the flower of holineſs, and likeſt to the heavenly ſtate; and that the Spirit ſanctifieth, by making God and goodneſs pleaſant to us.

14. And hereby it made me find, that the praiſes of God are the ſweeteſt and nobleſt exerciſes of Religion; when before I placed more in lamenting ſin and miſery.

15. And

15. And this maketh many things needless to me, that else would seem needful; I want not more company; I want no recreation but for my body; if I have not what I would have, I see where only it is to be found.

16. And I am assured that the constant pleasure of my mind, hath not only kept me from melancholy, but from greater sicknesses, and tended to the lengthning of my life (as *Scaliger* saith, *Pleasant Studies do.*) For constant pleasure must needs tend to health.

17. And this taste hath made me long for more, and had I not felt that it is good to draw near to God, and very desirable to know him and his will, I should never have so earnestly beg'd for clearer light, and more near and sweet communion with him; pleasure is the cause of strong desire.

18. It hath been one of my greatest helps against many temptations, of subtile enemies that tempt men to sadducism and doubt of the life to come.

19. It hath made me more communicative to others, for we would all have partakers in our delights.

20. And it hath greatly furthered my Repen-

Repentance and hatred of sin, when I have tasted what pleasure it depriveth us of; and the abhorrence and loathing of my self that can delight in such a God and Saviour, and word no more: when I tast how good it is, and see so much reason to rejoice in it, and the hopes of glory a thousand fold more than I do, none of all the actual sins of my life, do make me half so much loath my naughty heart, as to think that my want of greater joy in so great and near a good, doth shew so much weakness in my Faith, and Hope, and Love! O that I had more Faith and Love that I might have more of this delight!

Hearers I have sincerely told you what comfort you may have if you will not refuse it from the Word of God, and from the experience of *David*, and (because things near are apteſt to affect) from the experience of our deceased friend, and of my self, and indeed of all Gods Servants in their degree; you would live in joy; you would dye in joy; we need it in a life of so much trouble, and for a change that else is terrible; and its sure and near. O Sirs we need another kind of comfort, than sport or appetite, or

wealth,

wealth, or any such fading vanity will give us, you may have some of it, if you will. And though joy be the top of grace which we arrive not at with a wish, nor in an hour, yet the nature of the new creature relisheth or savoureth the things of the Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 5, 6, 7. And the Spirit of Adoption is a Spirit of filial Love, and cryeth *Abba* Father, and the Love of God the Father, the Grace of the Son, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, which are the believers part, are all of them the greatest comforters; and Christ giveth believers that seek and trust him, that spring of living waters, which tendeth to everlasting satisfaction, and cureth indigent and sinful thirst.

Will you then have any portion, heritage and joy which will be worthy of a man, and shall go further with you than the grave? If you will you may: God and this Congregation are witnesses that it was offered you. But think not to refuse it, and prefer the transitory pleasures of sin before it, and at last have it, & find that which you refused, or which you sought not first, *Mat.* 6. 33. nor to find a treasure in Heaven where you never laid it up or sought it. The hopes of the wicked

perish,

periſh, and the hypocrites hopes are as the giving up of the ghoſt: But the righteous hath hope in his death, and therefore may dye in peace and joy, *Job* 8. 13, 14. and 11. 20. *Pro.* 11. 7. and 14. 32.

Perhaps ſome will ſay, that ſuch a diſcourſe of rejoycing is unſuitable to the mourning of a Funeral. I think not of ſuch a Funeral, in which we commemorate the Holy Life and Death, and believe the preſent and everlaſting joy of ſuch a Friend, and one with whom we have long joyned in ſeeking and waiting for that felicity, and hope ere long and for ever to rejoyce with Chriſt and her, and all the bleſſed. And Funeral Sermons are not for the benefit (though for the due honour) of the dead, but of the living, to teach us all to prepare for death, which indeed is ſo much of the buſineſs of our whole life, that all the reſt is but a vain ſhew, and fooliſh trifling or much worſe. And wherein doth our preparation for death ſo much conſiſt, as foreſeeing what ſo great a change will need, and what a tryal it will put our Faith and Hope to, to ſeek and get ſuch ſecurity for our everlaſting ſtate, and ſuch

ound belief of it, and setled content and comfort in it, which the fears of death, udgment, and Hell, may not shake or vercome, that so we may finish our ourse with joy, and pass through the 'alley of the shadow of death, and fear o evil, but may comfort one another nd our selves with this, that we shall for ver be with the Lord; and may say vith *Paul, I have fought a good fight, I ave finished my course; henceforth is aid up for me a crown of righteousness,* vhich God the righteous judge will give, o me and to all that love Christs appea- ance; when he shall come to be glori- ied in his Saints, and admired in all them hat do believe, and shall say, *well done ood and Faithful Servant, Enter thou into he joy of thy Lord.*

Woe and for ever woe to every soul of you, that shall finally reject or neglect he offer of such an heritage and joy! And blessed be that grace which hath caused all true believers to prefer it in heir highest esteem and choice and see- king. I have lookt about to see if there were any better and surer to be had: and I am fully satisfied it must be this or none. I offer you but what God hath caused

caused me and all that he will save to choose; and Lord grant that I may never look back to any other; let the Love of God my Heavenly Father, the grace of Jesus Christ my Lord, and the joy of the sanctifying Spirit, sealing up the promise of God as my security, and writing his Law and Gospel in my heart, be my heritage and joy; and I shall never envy the most prosperous sinner their portion in this life, but shall live and dye in the thankful praise of the God of my salvation, who is *Essential, Infinite, Joyful Love. Amen, Amen.*

BOOKS

Books Printed for, and are to be Sold by John Hancock, *at the Sign of the Three Bibles in* Popes-Head Alley *in* Cornhil.

THeological Treatises, being 8 Theses of Divinity.
Production of Man's Soul.
Divine Predestination.
The true Church Regiment.
Predictions of Messias.
Christs two Genealogies.
The Revelation Revealed.
Christ's Millenar Reign.
The Worlds Dissolution. By *Rob. Vilvain.*

An Epitom of Essays, containing 6 Classes.

Of
1. Theologicals.
2. Historicals.
3. Heterogeneals.
4. Bruto-Anglicals.
5. Miscellaneals.
6. Mutuatitials.

Beside a Fardel of 76 Fragments. By *Robert Vilvain.*

Twelve

Twelve Books lately publiſhed by Mr *Tho. Brooks*, late Preacher of the Goſpe at *Margarates New-Fiſh-Street.*

1. Precious Remedies againſt Satan Devices, or Salve for Believers and Unbelievers Sores: being a Companion for thoſe that are in Chriſt, or out of Chriſt.

2. Heaven on Earth: Or a ſerious Diſcourſe touching a Well-Grounded Aſſurance of Mans Everlaſting Happineſs.

3. The unſearchable Riches of Chriſt held forth in 22 Sermons.

4. Apples of Gold for Young Men and Women, or the Happineſs of being good betimes.

5. A String of Pearls: Or the beſt things reſerved till laſt.

6. The Mute Chriſtian under the Smarting Rod, with Sovereign Antidotes againſt the moſt miſerable Engines.

7. An Ark for all Gods *Noahs in a ſtormy Day.*

8. The Crown and Glory of Chriſtianity, in 48 Sermons on *Heb.* 12. 14.

9. The Privy Key of Heaven: Or a Diſcourſe of Cloſet-Prayer.

10. An Heavenly Cordial for ſuch as have had or eſcaped the Plague.

11. A Cabinet of choice Jewels, or a Box

Box of precious Oyntment. Containing ſpecial Maxims, Rules, and Directions, in order to the clearing up of Mans Intereſt in Chriſt, and his Title to all the Glory of another World.

12. *Londons* Lamentations.

The Godly Mans Ark, in ſeveral Sermons. To which is added Mrs *Moor*'s Evidences for Heaven. By *Edmund Calamy*, *B. D.* at *Aldermanbury*.

Chriſts Communion with his Church Militant. By *Nicholas Dockyer*.

Sin the Plague of Plagues. By *Ralph Venning*.

A true Narrative of thoſe two never to be forgotten Deliverances, One from the *Spaniſh* Invaſion in 88, the other from the Helliſh Powder-plot, *Nov.* 5. 1605. To which is newly added a brief Account of the late Horrid Plot diſcovered, 1678. By Mr. *Sam. Clark*.

The Accurate Accomptant, or *London* Merchant; Being Inſtructions for keeping Merchants Accompts. By *Thomas Brown* Accomptant.

Short Writing, the moſt Eaſie. Exact, Lineal and Speedy Method that hath ever yet been obtained, as thouſands in this City and elſe where, can from their own expe-

experience teſtifie. By *Theophilus Metcalf.*

Alſo a Book called a Schoolmaſter to it, explaining all the Rules thereof.

A Word of Advice to Saints, or a choice drop of Honey from the Rock Chriſt.

A Copy-Book of the neweſt and moſt uſeful Hands, with directions for Spelling and Ciphering.

Bridges Remains, being eight choice Sermons. By the late Reverend Mr. *William Bridge* of *Yarmouth.*

A Diſſuaſive from Conformity to the World. Alſo God's ſeverity againſt impenitent Sinners. By *Henry Stubbes* Miniſter of the Goſpel.

Venning's *Remains*, being the ſubſtance of many Sermons, by Mr. *Ralph Venning*; prepared by himſelf for the Preſs a little before his death.

The Poor Man's Family-Book. By *Richard Baxter.*

Luther's 34 ſpecial and choice Sermons.

Goſpel-love, Heart-purity, and the flouriſhing of the Righteous, being the laſt Sermons of that late eminent Divine Mr. *Joſeph Caryl.*

An excellent Catechiſm by the late Reverend Mr. *Jeremiah Burroughs.*

FINIS.